



Assessment and Feedback Policy

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ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

1. Thomas Tallis School Plan 2020-23 has five aims.

1	A powerful curriculum
2	The best teachers
3	Great learning and progress
4	Excellent personal development
5	A model for a better world

As part of aim 5 Thomas Tallis School has adopted the *Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education*. This means that we try to behave in a principled and correct manner in everything we do. Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. We therefore behave with **selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership**. We demonstrate **trust, wisdom, kindness, justice, service, courage and optimism**.

At Tallis we view effective assessment and meaningful feedback as integral to improving progress and attainment. Regular assessment allows teachers to plan successful lessons, adapt teaching effectively and challenge student misconceptions. Planned assessments help teachers to understand thoroughly what is expected to have been understood by students and evidence their progress in a meaningful way. Clear systems, providing good feedback, can become self-improving as participants learn how to optimise outcomes, giving them agency and control.

Individual departments should use the principles outlined in this assessment and feedback policy to create their own subject-specific, tailored departmental assessment policies. This is really an 'internalising' of the school departmental policy, making it fit the demands of the subject-specific curriculum, in the knowledge that curriculum and subject leaders are responsible for setting and monitoring the quality and frequency of feedback from teachers working within their team.

Aims of this policy

- Ensure consistency in the approach to assessment and feedback for all teachers and students.
- Set out expectations for all members of the school community with regards to assessment and feedback.

What do we mean by assessment and feedback?

'Human beings can get really good at quite complex tasks if they just have good feedback that tells them whether they are succeeding'

The Great Teaching Toolkit

Assessment refers to a wide variety of methods or tools used by teachers to evaluate and measure the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition or educational needs of students. It should take place frequently as part of every lesson using a variety of means including reviewing prior knowledge, questioning and high-frequency, low stakes testing. There are also more formal means of assessment take place in-class or an examination hall in the form of formative or summative pieces. Written responses offer a key way of providing feedback to pupils and helping teachers assess their students' understanding. The type of feedback students get on their work will vary according to the subject. In drama, PE, art and music for example, much of the feedback will be verbal. In fact, much of the best feedback in all subjects is verbal while the students are working.

How do we assess students' progress?

Quality Teaching at Tallis focuses on four priorities identified by Evidence Based Education's review of teaching and learning as necessary to aid student progress. As part of the fourth strand, focused on Activating Hard Thinking, the evidence suggests six strategies for

successfully assessing student progress and giving feedback which form part of our Aspects of Great Teaching framework at Tallis.

These are:

1. using questioning and dialogue to elicit student thinking
2. getting responses from all students
3. using high-quality assessment to evidence learning
4. interpreting, communicating and responding to assessment evidence appropriately
5. responding appropriately to feedback from students about their thinking/knowledge/understanding
6. giving students actionable feedback to guide their learning

The above bullet points recognise assessment and feedback as something which should be taking place continuously within the classroom and, once feedback is given, students should be given tasks which embed and reinforce learning; requiring them to practice until learning is secure and ensuring that once-learnt material is reviewed/revisited to prevent forgetting. We should be aiming to check all students' understanding as frequently as possible through in-class questioning and dialogue as well as looking at the work produced.

Routinely reading, checking and monitoring students' work connects us to their learning and helps to ensure they care about the work they produce. It shows students we value their work and provides us with crucial on-going information about how well they are learning. It also enables us to monitor the completion of class-based and home learning tasks. This kind of routine checking should be regular, timely and manageable. Frequency will vary from subject to subject, but as a general rule, work should be checked approximately every two to four weeks, or twice per half-term.

Summative assessment will vary according to the key stage. At KS3, summative assessment will be informed by KS3 attainment criteria. At KS4/5 assessment will be informed by the criteria and grade boundaries published by the exam boards. At Tallis, we have a formal in-class assessment week for each KS3 year group at different times of the year as well as in-class, end of year exams. For Year 10 and KS5 formal mock examinations run in the hall as well as an in-class assessment week at different points in the year. Year 11 have two formal mock periods prior to their public examinations in the summer. Timely feedback will be provided to students following these exams with data collected in time to be sent home as part of the reporting process.

How do we give feedback?

Feedback is specific information given to the learner about their performance relative to learning goals. It should aim to (and be capable of) producing improvement in students' learning.

Providing effective feedback is challenging. At Tallis, we use research to frame our feedback which suggests that it should:

- be specific, accurate and clear (e.g. “It was good because you...” rather than just “correct”)
- compare what a learner is doing right now with what they have done wrong before (e.g. “I can see you were focused on improving X as it is much better than last time’s Y...”)
- encourage and support further effort and be given sparingly so that it is meaningful
- provide specific guidance on how to improve and not just tell students when they are wrong
- be supported with effective professional development for teachers.¹

Recent studies also suggest that careless mistakes should be marked differently to errors resulting from misunderstanding. The latter may be best addressed by providing hints or questions which lead students to underlying principles; the former by simply marking the mistake as incorrect, without giving the right answer.²

Responding to feedback

Once feedback has been given, students need to be able to respond. When giving feedback, therefore, we should offer students time to reflect critically on how to craft and improve their work and then to develop new techniques to put their feedback into practice. A dialogue is opened up with students about their feedback, and we offer time and space for this to happen. To develop more disciplined learners we may encourage students to:

1. Reflect critically – we expect students to spend time reflecting on their feedback. This is most effective when done individually, in silence.
2. Developing techniques – we model and scaffold to exemplify the feedback we have given and show students how to improve.
3. Crafting and improving - as well as encouraging students to critically reflect on their feedback, time can also be effectively used for crafting and improving work. This allows students to immediately apply their feedback and put the techniques into practice.

Disciplined:
Crafting and improving
Reflecting critically
Developing techniques



¹ <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/>

² https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/EEF_Marking_Review_April_2016.pdf

If there is no reflection or use of the feedback, it means no gap is closed: learning has not moved forwards. This means the time we have spent marking students' work is wasted time. Of course, our curriculum time is limited and we all have to teach lots of content but without giving up time for reflection we are picking up errors/omissions/misconceptions, commenting on them, but not allowing pupils to address them. This means we have flagged up a learning gap but not given pupils the opportunity to bridge it. Closing this gap in learning needs to be prioritised.

There are many different tasks that pupils can do during reflective time. It depends on what they got wrong or missed out in their assessed work. The following list is by no means exhaustive:

- Redrafting of a whole piece of work
- Redrafting of a section of the work
- Redoing something (for example a graph)
- Answering a question / questions
- Editing

Feedback should be given and followed up with reflective improvement in accordance with this policy every 4-6 weeks, or a minimum of once per half-term.